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DE RUEHRY #0171/01 0781658
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 191658Z MAR 09
FM AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3552
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CONAKRY 000171

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/19/2019

TAGS: PGOV PREL EAID ASEC GV

SUBJECT: SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONTACT GROUP MEETING ON GUINEA

REF: A. CONAKRY 0120
1B. CONAKRY 0169

Classified By: CHARGE ELIZABETH RASPOLIC FOR REASONS 1.4 B AND D

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. The International Contact Group on Guinea (ICG-G) met for the second time in Conakry on March 16. The Forces Vives proposed a more defined and cohesive schedule for voter registration, a Constitutional Referendum, Legislative and Presidential elections, but the proposed election dates were not as precise as the ICG-G had expected.

A rather lengthy and, by now, formulaic session was orchestrated at the Palais des Peuples by CNDD President Moussa Dadis Camera. He later told a smaller group that he awaited a precise electoral schedule to be presented to him by the Forces Vives. The local contact group continues to monitor the situation. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) On March 16, the ICG-G met for the second time in Conakry to assess the current situation and to see what progress had been made since the last ICG-G meeting in mid-February. The meeting was co-chaired by the President of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, and the Minister and Special Envoy of the African Union, Ibrahima Fall. The European Union, the Organization of Islamic Conference, the Organization of Francophone States, the United Nations, the Mano River Union, and France and Burkina Faso, in their capacities as UN Security Council members, sent representatives from their respective capitals or headquarters. Charge d,Affaires Elizabeth Raspolic represented the United States.

¶3. (C) While the ICG-G had requested a private meeting in the afternoon with the coup leader and President of the National Council for Democracy and Development (CNDD) Moussa Dadis Camera, the group was summoned once again to a tour de force meeting at the Palais des Peuples (the erstwhile National Assembly Chamber.) filled with chanting loyalists. Jean-Marie Dore, the public spokesman for the Forces Vives (political parties, civil society and unions) and an announced presidential candidate, read the Forces Vives two-page document outlining a somewhat vague proposed schedule for a Constitutional Referendum, legislative and presidential elections (including a run-off session for the latter), all to be accomplished by the end of 2009. Religious leaders spoke, as did two youth group representatives, both of whom were judged by most to have been incomprehensible. Then Dadis took the podium and didn't relinquish it for two hours. The first five minutes he read from his written speech, extolling his firm hand in guiding the nation through a peaceful transition. Unfortunately, he then began to extemporize. He made it clear that he was the inspiration for the CNDD and that its members don,t have the intelligence to direct the nation, as he does. Claiming that destiny had brought him to this position, he promised the audience and, presumably the

nation, that he would never lie. He stated his intention was to create a Guinea that stood united rather than one disintegrating according to ethnic loyalties. Often resorting to the third person, he reminded the listeners that &Le Capitaine8 is an honest man who doesn't sleep and that every sacrifice he makes is for the good of Guinea.

¶4. (C) As the ICG-G began to assemble to return to the hotel to negotiate the communique, we received word to proceed to the Presidential retreat on an upper floor of the Palais. Surrounded by 150 or so, including the ICG-G, all party representatives of the Forces Vives, the entire CNDD, the entire Cabinet and other hangers-on, Dadis proceeded to speak more softly and calmly, urging the Forces Vives to present him an election schedule that he could consider. He also urged the Forces Vives to work with the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) and the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Political Affairs (MATAP) to resolve the outstanding problem of how to properly include overseas Guinean citizens in the electoral process. When the German Ambassador asked Dadis for his opinion on precise election dates, the reply was that he had said quite clearly that he awaited a proposal from the Forces Vives. According to Dadis, the dates are up to the political parties as, otherwise, it wouldn't be democratic. At the urging later of the ICG-G, the Forces Vives scheduled a meeting for the next afternoon to discuss the electoral calendar so that a detailed proposition could be made to Dadis and the CNDD. Reftel (B) covers that second meeting with the local Contact Group representatives.

¶5. (C) COMMENT. For a variety of reasons, the logistics of CONAKRY 00000171 002 OF 002

a one-day conference didn't work very well. Starting at 0800 and ending at 2300 meant a marathon session that should have been split over two days. Dr. Chambas and Minister Fall had to depart the next morning for Bissau, hence the compressed schedule. Further, it was the consensus of most that it would not be acceptable to subject the ICG-G to another dog-and-pony show at the Palais in the future. A more private session would be more productive. Whether Dadis would agree to this or not is unknown. The ICG-G recognized the progress made since their last meeting, e.g., the lifting of the ban on meetings of political parties and unions and the beginning efforts of the CNDD to address the drug-trafficking problem among civilians. At the same time, there is much room for improvement in this area as the drug-trafficking within the military continues to go mostly unaddressed. Reluctance to address the issue might well be due to the high positions held by some allegedly involved and also perhaps because of the inherent instability within the military if loyalties are challenged and allegiances change as outside money sources dry up. The ICG-G agreed to reconvene in early May in Conakry. END COMMENT.

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